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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/14/2016

TAGS: [BE](#) [KPAL](#) [LE](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: BELGIAN RESPONSE TO THE DEMARCHE ON THE JULY 17
FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: A. SECSTATE 114605

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 115346

[1](#)1. (c) Poloff met with FM Michel Tilemans. Ref A GAERC points shared, but Tilemans interest went straight to Lebanon/Hizballah points. He said De Gucht will be speaking on this issue at the GAERC but wouldn't give specifics when pressed. This will be Belgian focus for EU, since they were heavily invested and main authors of a Benelux paper. Tilemans said Belgians feel recent Hizballah actions were an outright act of war, but also feel Israeli reactions to soldier abductions is main cause for most recent cycle of violence and they (Israelis) are leaving little room to de-escalate. Later in the day, De Gucht made a public statement condemning Hizballah but criticizing Israel's military actions as excessive.

[1](#)2. (c) Tilemans made no substantive comment about other points. Embassy also conveyed July 13 demarche on N.K. to Tilemans (ref B)
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